seasonal factories defined under the Act. M/s. Formix Industries, Punnathura, Kerala was treated as not coverable under the Act for some time because it engaged in manufacturing of rubber. The matter came to notice and has been examined and it has since been decided to enforce the ESI Act in all the seasonal factories including M/s. Formix Industries which are working for a period exceeding seven months in a year. No case of connivance of the ESI Corporation.

(b) Yes, Sir. Such companies are detected in the course of periodical surveys which is an ongoing process.

Rate of industrial growth

1691. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rate of industrial growth has shown a decline during April-July, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken by Government to bring the growth rate at par with the previous rate;

(d) whether employment in the organised industrial sector has also shown a comparable decline in the current year; and

(e) if so, the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) As per Index of Industrial Production, the overall industrial production in April—July, 1996-97 has recorded a growth of 9.3% as compared to growth rate of 12% recorded in the corresponding period of last year. The deceleration in industrial growth is confined to a few sectors particularly, the crude petroleum, fertilizers and power generation etc.

(c) Sector-specific strategies have been initiated to remove constraints in the underperforming sectors. Adequate credit with softened interest rates assured to industries through the recently announced busy season credit policy are providing further impetus to growth.

(d) There is no evidence to suggest that employment in the organised industrial sector has shown any decline in the current year.

(e) Does not arise.

Closure of iron ore mines in Orissa

1692. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of iron ore mines closed down in Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Sundergarh districts in Orissa;

(b) the date(s) of the closure of those mines;

(c) the approximate number of workers engaged in those iron ore mines;

(d) the steps taken to provide alternative employment to those workers who have been through out of employment; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) As per information available from Govt. of Orissa, three Iron Ore mines have been closed down recently in Keonjhar District. There is no report of closing down of any mine in Mayurbhanj

and Sundergarh Districts. The other details are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of the Mines	Date of closure	No. of workers Involved	Name of mines in which all the affected workers have been absorbed
1.	Gandhamardan 'A'	26.12.95	124	Gandhamardan Bl. 'B'
2.	Kalaparbat	10.7.96	52	Different mines of the lessee
3.	Balita	10.7.96	25	Baitarani Iron Ore mines

(d) and (e) All the workers affected by closure of the mines have already been employed in other mines of the lessees.

Welfare projects for working children under the Grants-in-aid scheme in Gujarat

1693. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether voluntary agencies are being assisted financially for taking up Welfare projects for working children under the Grants-in-aid scheme by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of voluntary agencies presently being financial assisted in the State of Gujarat under the scheme;

(d) whether Government propose to increase the grant to voluntary agencies of the State; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (e) Voluntary and Non-Governmental Organisations are financially assisted to the extent of 75% of the project cost under the scheme of "Grants-in-aid to voluntary organisation" for taking up action oriented projects for the benefit of child labour. The project activities include measures for prevention of child labour, improved working conditions of child labour through extension of welfare facilities like non-formal education, provision of vocational training, health check etc. Proposals received from registered voluntary and non-governmental organisations duly recommended by the State Governments are considered for financial assistance under the scheme. During 1995-96, a total 24 voluntary organisations were assisted under this scheme for implementation of different projects. However, no voluntary agencies from Gujarat had availed financial assistance under the scheme.

Policies for investments in the mining sector

1694. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to develop and adopt transport policies to facilitate investments in the mining sector;

(b) if so, the details of the foreign and Indian private companies which have shown interest in the mining sector of the country;

(c) whether Government have set any norms and conditions for private participation in mining sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) In mining sector grant of Prospectin Licence (PL) and Mining Leases (ML) i governed by Mines & Mineral (Regulation & Development) Act, 195